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Project I.D. No. 199

NAME: Uetsuka, Hajime DATE OF BIRTH: 9/27/1899 PLACE OF BIRTH: Kumamoto
Age: 79 Sex: M Marital Status: W Education: 1st year in High School

PRE-WAR:
Date of arrival in U.S.: 1916 Age: 16 M.S. Y.Y. Port of entry: San Fran.
*Occupation/s: 1. Farm Helper 2. Casino Dealer 3. Cannery Worker
Place of residence: 1. Concord, Ca. 2. Fresno, Ca. 3. San Fran., Ca.
Religious affiliation: 4. Los Angeles, Ca. 5. Salt Lake City,
Community organizations/activities: Utah 6. Tacoma, Wash. 7. Rochehauer Isl

EVACUATION: * 4. Fisherman 5. Domestic Worker
Name of assembly center:
Name of relocation center: Tule Lake, Ca.
Dispensation of property: Names of bank/s:
Jobs held in camp: 1. Guard 2.
Jobs held outside of camp:
Left camp to go to: Rochehauer Island

POST-WAR:
Date returned to West Coast: End of War
Address/es: 1. Rochehauer Island (1-2 yrs) 2. Seattle, Washington
3.
Religious affiliation:
Activities: 1. Tacoma Club 2. 3.
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death:

Name of interviewer: Heihachiro Takarabe Date: 8/15/78 Place: Seattle, Wash.
Translator: Takako Yoshida

NAME: HAJIME UETSUKA

BIRTH PLACE: KUMAMOTO PREFECTURE

BIRTH DATE: SEPTEMBER 27, 1899

OCCUPATION: NIGHT CLUB WORKER

DATE OF IMMIGRATION: 1916

LOCATION OF CAMP: TULE LAKE CAMP

Interview Date:

Interview Location: Seattle, Washington

Interview: Heihachiro Takarabe

Translator: Takako M. Yoshida

Q: We're studying about the Isseis in America and gathering information about their experiences and their lives so we may share this information with the young Sansei and the Yonsei. I'd like to follow your life through the various periods in your life, from the time you were in Japan, how you cam to America, ab ut the war and other things about you. I'll be alking you some questions so please answer them to the best you can from your recollections.

First, please state your name.

A: My name is Hajime Uetsuka.

Q: You are from Kumamoto prefecture?

A: Yes. I'm from Kumamoto prefecture. From Kanmatsuki-gun, Otome-mura, Kita-guchi.

Q: When were you born?

A: On September 27, 1899.

Q: 1899? Then you are . . .

A: 79 years old.

Q: 79 years old? You're young for an Issei.

A: No, not many older Iseeis are around now.

Q: What did your family do?

A: My home?

Q: Yes, your father back home in Japan.

A: We were farmers.

Q: Was your father a big farmer?

A: No. My father has been in the United States since I was born. I don't know anything about him.

Q: Were was he?

A: In California mostly. Predominately in the Sacramento area, I

believe.

Q: So, you were raised by your mother?

A: Yes.

Q: How many siblings did you have?

A: I didn't have any brothers or sisters.

Q: You were an only child?

A: Yes.

Q: So, your mother farmed?

A: Yes.

Q: Was your mother a strong person - a strict disciplinarian?

A: Oh, no. She was a kind, gentle mother.

Q: How far did you go to school?

A: Until the 1st year in high school, then, I came to this country.

Q: How old were you then?

A: I was 16 years old.

Q: Do you remember much about school? Did you like school?

A: No, not at all. I hated school. I hardly went to school. I preferred going swimming and fishing. I hardly ever went to school.

Q: Do you remember about your friends?

A: No, I don't remember.

Q: You said you played and had fun. Did you go fishing mostly?

A: Yes, that's right. I went to catch fish. I'd dive into the river and catch them.

Q: Did you use a fishing pole?

A: No, I catch the fish by hand.

Q: What did you catch? Carp?

A: Oh, I caught catfish and some other kinds of fish living between

the rocks in the river.

Q: Sounds like you had fun.

A: Yes, I did.

Q: Did you eat them after you caught them?

A: Yes.

Q: Did your mother get angry when you played hooky?

A: She didn't know anything about it. My grandfather knew, though. If I came home with some fish, he'd know for sure.

Q: How old were you then?

A: Oh, around 11 or so. I was in grammar school.

Q: Didn't the school say anything to your family?

A: No, not at all.

Q: What were the circumstances that brought you to this country?

A: Someone wrote my uncle in Americal telling him that if I remained in Japn I'd just get into trouble. They said that I'd just be in trouble with the police all the time. My uncle discussed this with my father and he sent me a ticket.

Q: They sent a letter to your uncle? Why not to your father?

A: Didn't know his address.

Q: Did you know where your uncle was?

A: Yes. He was in Fresno. He had a noodle shop there.

Q: What was your relation to your uncle?

A: He was my mother's younger brother.

Q: He had a noodle shop in Fresno?

A: Yes.

Q: When your were finally to leave for America, which port did you leave from?

A: I left from Nagasaki. In those days, all of us left from Nagasaki.

Q: Did someone take you from Kumamoto to Nagasaki?

A: No, I went alone.

Q: You must have been very sad to leave home.

A: Yes, I was very sad. I didn't want to go to America.

Q: So, you didn't want to come?

A: No, I didn't. My grandfather told me that if I didn't go that he'd go to America himself. He did come later.

Q: Your grandfather went too?

A: Yes, my uncle in Fresno sent for my mother's father. My grandfather said to me, "if you don't go, I'll go." My uncle invited my grandfather to go to America and that he'd show him the World's Fair in San Francisco.

Q: So your grandfather had already gone to America once.

A: Yes.

Q: But, you didn't come with him, did you?

A: No, I didn't. Everyone told him to go so he went first and then I got sent later. My grandfather stayed in this country for about a year. Then I came to this country so my grandfather took 2 of my uncle's children and went back to Japan. They took him to San Francisco and sent him home. Since I had come he said a man was needed back home in Japan and so he went back.

Q: You left from Nagasaki, right? What kind of people were on the ship with you?

A: There were a lot of picture brides.

Q: Did you make any firends on the ship?

A: I guess so. We got off at Hawaii together and had fun for a while.

Q: What did you do on the ship?

A: Played. There's nothing else to do.

Q: Was the food good?

A: No way. Not at all. The place was so smelly, it stunk with (unclear).

Q: With what?

A: (unclear). All they fed us was this (unclear). There were Philippinos on board with us too. They were bound for Southeast Asia.

Q: Do you remember the name of the ship?

A: Yes. Nihon Maru.

Q: You must have been one of the youngest on board being just years old.

A: Yes, I was young. I was always last.

Q: Do you remember which year this was?

A: Gee. . . what year was it? . . . 19. . .

Q: around 1915?

A: No, it was around 1916.

A: Were there many picture brides on board with you?

A: Yes, many of them. I think it was about a year or so later that the picture brdies were prohibited.

Q: No, the prohibition was much later.

A: Oh, was it?

Q: Did you talk to thse women?

A: Yes, I did.

Q: What did you talk about?

A: We joked around alot. They didn't know anything about their future husbands, you know and they married as soon as they arrived. They said they loved the boys back home and not their new husbands. There were many women who came to this country against their will. They had children and remained in this country. Some of these

women were already pregnant in Japan so they had no alternative but to go. some of the women were very unhappy. The children wouldn't know anything aobut their circumstances, of course.

Q: Weren't they 4 or 5 years older than you?

A: Yes, they were.

Q: Were there any memorable moment on the ship?

A: No, not really.

Q: So the trip wasn't that interesting?

A: No, not at all. The ship was so smelly.

Q: Did you get sea sick?

A: No, I didn't

Q: You were only 16 years old, so I guess you didn't have any girlfriends back home, did you?

A: Girls were all over the palce.

Q: Even in Japan?

A: Oh, sure. I had girlfriends in school.

Q: Oh, really. That's pretty good.

A: I acted like a big shot. I didn't study; I left my books alone and went out at nights. I was so young in those days.

Q: Did the ship stop in Hawaii?

A: Yes, it did.

Q: Did you get off the ship?

A: Yes, I did. We spent a night in Hawaii.

Q: What did you do in Hawaii?

A: Just spent the night at an inn.

Q: Did you go sight seeing?

A: No I didn't. How could I? I didn't know anything about Hawaii.

Q: No one showed you around?

A: Oh, no. There was no one who would do that for me.

Q: Did you buy a banana in Hawaii?

A: Yes, I did. I bought bananas and pineapples.

Q: Were you able to eat them?

A: Yes, I did.

Q: Where did the ship go then?

A: We went to San Francisco.

Q: Did you go to Angle Island right away?

A: Yes, we did.

Q: How was it?

A: I guess it wasn't so bad.

Q: Ho long did you stay there? Did you spend a night or so there?

A: I was there for 2 weeks.

Q: That long? Did you have bad eyes?

A: Yes, that's right. I had bad eyes.

Q: Weren't you checked for worms? For roundworms?

A: Yes, we were. I didn't have any roundworms, but I had bad eyes.

Q: How was the food at Angle Island?

A: Gee, I don't remember. There was a Japanese cook - food so we could eat. So we had Japanese food thre.

Q: Did your father or someone meet your there?

A: Yes, my father came to meet me.

Q: Where did you meet him?

A: In San Francisco.

Q: Not in Angle Island?

A: No, we weren't allowed to see anyone on Angle Island. I saw my father after I got clearance.

Q: How did you feel when you saw your father for the first time?

A: No much. He was just like a stranger. I never knew him.

Q: Did you call him "Father"?

A: Yes, I did. But, the feelings didn't change.

Q: What did your father say to you when he saw you?

A: Gee, I don't remember.

Q: Where did you go after here?

A: We went to Concord. My father's cousin lived there and he was also a farmer. We went there as farm helpers.

Q: So was your father in Concord all the time?

A: He worked in Concord, Sacramento and in the vacinity. He went back and forth.

Q: Did you work with your father on the farm?

A: Yes, I did. I worked with him for about a year.

Q: You went to Concord. What month was that?

A: Let's see . . . I don't remember. Yes, it was just at the beginning of the summer.

Q: What did you do in Concord?

A: I was a farm helper. My uncle was a farmer there so I helped him.

Q: What did he farm?

A: Pears and prunes.

Q: Did you get a monthly salary for this?

A: I probably did. I just don't remember. He gave me money as I needed it. There wasn't a set salary.

Q: Was the work streneous?

A: No, it was relatively east. My core is farming so farm work wasn't that hard for me.

Q: How long were you in Concord?

A: Let's see . . . how many years did I spend there? I worked in Concord during the winter and in Sacramento during the summer

picking asparagus. I also went to pick grapes in Fresno. I stayed in Concord for the winter pruning trees.

Q: Do you remember where Kaoshimo was?

A: Kaoshimo was in Portland, Isleton. Asparaus work was in Isleton and fruits were in Portland. Sakatani lived in Portland and had a large farm there.

Q: What do you remember the most about this period. Were there any interesting events that took place at this time?

A: Oh, nothing interesting happened at all. I just gambled all the tim

Q: What type of gambling?

A: Nanking gambling. Chinese gambling.

Q: Did you make any money by gambling?

A: I lost more thatn I won.

Q: Do you consider yourself a strong gambler?

A: Well, I'm not a weak gambler. Since coming out here after my wife's death, I've been gambling in Chinatown. I usually decide how much I'll lose in one night beforehand and I will not gamble over that. Even if I have money left in my pocket, I won't go over my limit. People would say to me, "hey, how come you're quitting with some money left?" I'd tell them, "what's the use of playing with a losing streak?"

Q: Didn't you know of people who have lost a lot of money?

A: Sure we all lose. Some people would spend thousands of yen just to get themselves out of jail and go right back to the gambling tables. The gambling casinos circulate about $1,000,000 in Los Angles, $100,000 in San Francisco and about $100,000 in Seattle.

Q: Did some of the Issei gamble away their whole weeks salary?

A: No, not their weekly salary. They earned money by the seasons.

Say they earn money during the pear season and they would gamble away the money they earned during that season.

Q: About how much was that?

A: I would earn about $1.75 to 1.85 a day if I worked the whole day. If I did piece work, I'd get about 10 to 25 dollars.

Q: How long did one season last?

A: Usually about two months.

Q: So one season's pay would total quite a bit, as much as $200.

A: Oh, sure. We'd gamble the entire sum away.

Q: Did you start gambling at a young age?

A: Yes, I started about 17 or 18 years old. My father came back from San Francisco one day after he sent off some people to Japan and when he came home he accused me of gambling and he got very angry. I hadn't done that at all, but since he accused me like that, I started to gamble in defiance of him. I ran away from his place. I wasn't going to work like the rest of the farmers and gamble my money away. I wanted to play around, have fun and gamble too, so I started to work at a gambling casino.

Q: How old were you then?

A: Around 18 or 20. It was around the time of the First World War. I had left to join the Army, but I was too young and they would not let me in. They told me to wait another year. So I didn't go into the army and instead worked in a gambling casino.

Q: What kind of work did you do?

A: I worked with the chips and payed the winners. I worked as as a deler. I worked in the Chinese gambling places.

Q: How much was your salary?

A: I earned about $10 a day and earned extra money from the boss

if I kept my eyes open and had good eyes. I earned about $25 to $30 including tips and all. The men from the rural areas would lose money and if I lend them $10 or so I'd get back $12 or $13 if they win. Of course, if they lost, I wouldn't get my money until the next time they cme back. I'd earned about $25 a day.

Q: Where did you start working?

A: In Fresno at a place called Delery. That was my own place.

Q: Where was the first place you started to work in a casino?

A: I worked . . . yes, it was in Fresno in Delery. Several of us got together and decided to open a place in Fresno. Those of us working in the casino became the partners.

Q: So you opened a place as an independent?

A: Yes, that's right.

Q: How many were involved?

A: Oh, about 15 people. Rich farmers backed us up and owned stock in it. That's how we got started.

Q: How much did you have to circulate?

A: Oh, about $10,000 or so.

Q: Did you make profits for this venture?

A: No, we lost. We first lost about $15,000 so we had to hold a meeting with our backers - we only had$7,000 or $8,000 circulated in the casino. Our backers told us to continue even though we were operating in the red because we had customers coming. Eventually we'd make some profits, they said. We only had $1,000 that night, but we opened anyway. We made $3,000 that night. In three days, we made $23,000. Now that we were making pretty good profits, some men began to struggle to become the Boss of the place and some troupble insued. I didn't wnat to

get involved in such conflicts, so I quit.

Q: How old were you when you started your own business?

A: About 20 or 21.

Q: How old were the rest of your partners?

A: The rest were much older, older and more experienced men, of course.

Q: Did you quit after you got a cut of your share?

A: YES.

Q: What did you do after this?

A: Oh, I worked on farms from one place after another. I was a Sumo wrestler in Fresno, went to San Francisco, went back home, visited a friend in Los Angeles.

Q: Where did you learn sumo wrestling?

A: In Japan. I wasn't a bad wrestler. I beat many wrestlers in Portland and Seattle and other cities nearby.

Q: Were you big, physically?

A: No, I'm pretty short, but I'd come in at least 2nd or 3rd in Los Angeles. I worked in a Kamaboko facotry for a while in Los Angeles. I saved up about $2,000. I went to work at a cannery in Wellmington.

Q: Where?

A: Wellmington in Los Angeles. It was a tuna cannery. I worked there for a year. Some of my friends got me to go out fishing with them. The European war had just ended so the Americans weren't allowed to fish in the Mexican waters. But, since we were immigrants to the United States, we were allowed in the Mexican waters. So after fishing for Sand Pedro tuna, we went to Mexico for about a month fishing in their waters. We caught

tuna there. Since I was single in those days, I could have saved up quite a bit of money, but I spent everything I earned.

Q: How did you spend your money?

A: In restaurants.

Q: Did you have many girlfriends?

A: Girlfriends? All the women around me were old ladies.

Q: When were you married? Was it much later?

A: Oh,yes, much later. It was after I came up here. Around 1939 or 1940.

Q: How long did you work as a fisherman?

A: How many years did I work there? . . . about 3 to 5 years, I guess. We went to Mexico often.

Q: Life of a fisherman is streneous and hard, isn't it?

A: No, it's not that straneous. It was a lot of fun.

Q: How many days would you be at sea at one time?

A: Just one day out in San Pedro for sardines. I forgot the sardine season, but in March the sardines are at its peak and then we can't catch fish during the rest of the season so we stop fishing for them. In the beginning of July, tuna ships go out for their fishing expeditions. August and September are the peak tuna and bonito season. Between the sardine and tuna seasons, we would go on land work on the farm picking strawberries. We didn't have any sea work between these two seasons so we went out as farm laborers. Later, we would get on the tuna ships and go to San Pedro to catch tuna and bonito. After we finished our job there, then we would go on to Mexico. We finished fishing in Mexico in about a month.

Q: Did you stay on board for the whole month without returning to a port?

A: Yes, That's right. We anchored in the middle of the ocean and fish. There's a boat called a "tender boat" and we'd leave that boat on the port in Mexico - well it really wasn't a real port, just an area to leave boats - and we would get on thost to fish. One year, I went all the way to Japan to catch tuna.

Q: What were you doing during depression, during the time of President Hoover?

A: What was I doing in those days? I think I was working in a gambling casino. Mr. Hoover wasn't President yet when I came to Seattle, so . . . I saw some people gather boxes and make small huts which they named Hoover building and people without money gathered together there.

Q: Were they mostly from Arkansas and Oklahoma?

A: I think there were some Japanese among them, too. I don't really know for sure.

Q: Were you having some hard times in those days?

A: No, not particularly. I was working at a casino at that time.

Q: How was businesss? Did you get much profit?

A: No, not at all. That's the reason why my salary was so low.

Q: When did you go out on your fishing expeditions?

A: The fishing expedition was before the Depression. The Depression hit after I came to Tacoma.

Q: You worked at a gambling casino in Fresno, right? Then what happened?

A: I left Fresno and then went to Los Angeles and I had started my own gambling place in Fresno.

Q: Did you work at a casino after Los Angles in Tacoma?

A: Yes, someone had asked me to go work at one so I started to

work in a casino again. This was after I went on the fishing expeditions for several years in Los Angeles. I went to quitting fishing and then went to Salt Lake City and came back to Los Angles again. From Los Angles I went to Tacoma. I just went from one place to another.

Q: What did you do in Utah?

A: I worked at a casino. Before I worked at the casino, I worked in a copper mine in Bringham. I worked on the railroad of the copper mine. I worked transporting the copper by railraod from the mines in the mountains to the town right below the mountain. I then quit the copper mine work and started to work at a casino.

Q: I understand that you worked as a dealer, but did you do any other kind of work in the casinos?

A: I counted the chips and worked as a dealer.

Q: Did some people become rawdy often after they lost?

A: No, if you lose you lose. My one hour would be up and I would change with another dealer.

Q: But didn't some of the customers who lost alot of money try to start fights?

A: We were afraid of the customers. We wouldn't start any fights with the customers. You could get killed that way. I never did hear of an actual murder in the casinos, though. We knew most of the customers, so they wouldn't do anything like that.

Q: Weren't there any bouncers in the casinos?

A: Sure, there were, but you couldn't tell who was a bouncer or who wasn't.

Q: While you were working in the casinos did you know of any one who

lost his entire savings and fortune through gambling?

A: Gee, I don't know. Most of the customers were working men so I don't know who lost how much. I don't know about the farm owners, but laborers lost most of their salary.

Q: Were the customers in Utah mostly the copper miners?

A: No, just anyone. Some people gambled in their camps and had their own bosses.

Q: Excuse me for asking, but did the owners of the casinos bribe the police?

A: Yes, that's right, they did. I spent money on the police. We spent most of the money on the upper echelon police officers and the policemen who went around door to door. We never gave money to two policmen at the same time; there was always one of us and one policeman because in this way there are no witnesses. So the bribes took place alone. One of our men would give the money to a lone policeman.

Q: Were you dealing with Chinese gambling in Utah, too?

A: Yes, that's right. Most Japanese everywhere went into Chinese gambling.

Q: You said Chinese gambling, but were some of the places run by the Japanese?

A: Yes, all of the places were run by the Japanese. But, of course, in Chinatown, the casisos were run by the Chinese. Chinese ran their own and the Japanese ran their own, too.

Q: Didn't the casinos have bad, smelly rooms withe smoke-filled rooms?

A: Oh, yes most certainly. I used to get headaches if I stayed in the rooms too long. The place was filled with smoke. We took

turns an hour at a time. We were scheduled one hour on duty and an hour off. If you had really bad eyes, then you could take off 2 or 3 hours. The bosses would use dealers with good eyes while you were off.

Q: We haven't met anyone who had worked in gambling casinos before and we are certainly facinated by you.

A: Yes, I'm sure you are. Since I've been under a Japanese physicians care, I only go gambling (3?) times a week. I came here to go into gambling. Some people were surprised that we had Japanese gambling places in America. All Japanese gambling places have been abolished since the war, though. Sometimes we thought of opening a place for us in Seattle but we worked for white employers.

Q: Many people must have known that you worked in casinos in the past and some must have come to ask you to work for them.

A: Yes, that's true.

Q: Did you ever play poker with your friends?

A: No, I nevaer played poker. But, I used to be a dealer's helper when I was working in casinos between Salt Lake City and Los Angeles. But, I never played poker myself.

Q: Do you ever gamble yourself?

A: Yes, I do sometimes. Dealers usually win anyway and they are the ones who have all the money they need. If you are the customer, all you have is $100 or $500 and after lose that the gambling is over. Can't play any more.

Q: Do you remember any unusual events during this time in your life?

A: No, not at all. The only activity I could squeeze in during this time in my life was fishing. I went fishing for salmon and trout

and this of that sort.

Q: How many years did you go on the fishing expeditions in Wellmington?

A: I did it for 3 years at first then my friend and I took out our own boat for one year. I guess I worked as a fisherman for 5 or 6 years.

Q: Why did you quit?

A: My father got seriously ill in Sacramento and I went to stay with him there. I stayed on in Sacramento with my mother after his death. My father had gone back to Japan and brough my mother to Sacramento.

Q: When did your mother come to America?

A: Gee, I don't remember when she came. My mother had to return to Japan because my father died.

Q: When did your father pass away? How old were you?

A: I don't know how old I was. I don't remember.

Q: Did you encounter any hail storms in Wellmington?

A: No, I didn't. Not in Wellmington, anyway. But we did get caught in a hail storn on the way back from one of our trips in Mexico. The trip which normally took us 3 hours to return took us 8 to 10 hours. That's about the only time.

Q: Was it dangerous for everyone?

A: Well, I sure wasn't too happy to be caught in one. The coast guards had to come look for us because they didn't know our whereabouts.

Q: You said you bought a boat. Did you do this on your own?

A: My friend and I jointly bought a small boat.

Q: So you used your own money?

A: Yes.

Q: how much did you pay for it?

A: Oh, about $1,000 or so. I was in the business for only a year when my father became ill and I had to go to Sacramento. So left everything with my friend. If my father hadn't gotten ill, I would have continued working with my friend for some time.

Q: Your father lived in Sacramento when he became ill, right?

A: Yes, that's right. He was working as a farmer.

Q: Did he have his own farm?

A: No, he worked for someone. He did work on his own farm, I guess, for about 2 years or so. I was still with him at that time. We lived in Stockton. He got high school students, his friends and I to go help him on his land picking fruits.

Q: When was this? Before or after your fishing expedition.

A: I don't remember when, but it was before I went to work as a fisherman. My father made some money off of tis venture and went back to Japan on this money. This is when he brought my mother back with him. I was in Fresno working at a gambling casino at that time.

Q: So the second time you saw your father was in Sacramento?

A: Yes, at his deathbed.

Q: Were you single at that time?

A: Yes, I was.

Q: What did you do after this?

A: I stayed a little while in Sacramento with my mother. From there I went to Salt Lake City, then to Utah City. In Utah City I worked at a casino. In Salt Lake City, I told people I was going to Tacoma, but instead I went to Los Angeles first. In Los Angeles I was in sumo competitions. From Los Angeles I went

to Tacoma

Q: Did you like Sumo wrestling?

A: Yes, I did.

Q: Did you practice a lot?

A: Yes. I always went to practice furing the winter. I practiced for two weeks in the winter in Los Angles.

Q: You didn't practice the entire year long?

A: Oh, no, we couldn't. We had to work and earn a living. We practiced only for two weeks in the winter.

Q: When is the sumo season?

A: In early spring usually.

Q: If you won in the competition, did you come up to San Francisco?

A: No. When I was in Fresno, no, I was in Sacramento them. That's right in Sacramento, I participated in the sumo competition in Sacramento. I wrestled in Los Angeles then came up to Tacoma.

Q: Did you work in a casino there?

A: Yes, that's right.

Q: Was the casino in Tacoma a large one?

A: No, it wasn't. It was a small place.

Q: How big was it?

A: Oh, probably worth around $20,000 or so.

Q: Are the gambling casinos set up like a company?

A: Yes, that's right. The casinos in Tacoma was funded by ones in Seattle.

Q: So, the various interested parties got together and set up an account?

A: Yes, that's right. Tacoma's money came only from Seattle. Seattle casinos probably gave $10,000 or so.

Q: What was the daily profit in those days?

A: I have no idea. Only an accountant would have that kind of information.

Q: But, did they earn quite a bit?

A: I guess so. They had days when they lost money, too. But, I guess they made more than they lost. Even in Fresno we profited about $23,000 in 3 days. Probably the profit was something similar.

Q: You got married in Tacoma, right?

A: Yes, that's right. In Tacoma.

Q: Who took car of the arrangements?

A: A friend. I had a friend who took care of everything. Right after my marriage, the Depression hit. The gambling casinos weren't making any money, so I started to work for a white family - my wife and I did. I worked in a casino for about one year after I was married. Then we started to work for a wealthy white family. How many years did we work thre? Anyway, I then returned Japan. Just when I returned the Manchurain Invasion occured. When I returned to the States I started to work on the island.

Q: Which island?

A: Rochehauer. A place near here. We worked for a white family on this island. Then World War II started.

Q: Who introduced you to your prospective wife? Was he a friend of yours?

A: Yes, He's name . . . was . . . Sato. That's right, Sato introduced me to her. He has passed away now. Passed away some time ago.

Q: Did your wife come from Japan?

A: No, she was in States.

Q: Was she a Nisei?

A: No, an Issei.

Q: How old were you when you got married?

A: I was . . . 40 or 45 years old.

Q: Was this before the war?

A: Yes, that's right. We got married during the depression.

Q: Was it around the time of President Hoover?

A: Gee, I don't remember. It probably was.

Q: How many years difference were there between you and your wife?

A: She was about 2 years older than I.

Q: Did you have any children?

A: No, we didn't. We didn't have any children.

Q: How many years were you married?

A: Ho, probably about 20 years or so.

Q: When did she pass away?

A: Its' been almost 20 years already.

Q: So you started working for a household after you married, right? Was it a live-in job?

A: Yes, it was a live-in job.

Q: Was it difficult to be married and live in the casino while you worked there?

A: No, not at all. I had a certain rank, whether I worked in the casinos or in a white family.

Q: You, of course, had to work hard in the casinos, right?

A: Well, working hard meant to use my brain. I didn't have to raise a hand, physically.

Q: When the War started - you know, when Pearl Harbor, was attacked - what were you doing then?

A: I was working for a white family on Rochehauer Island. MY boss was away in San Diego watching a horse race. I was at home. I had gone out to pick some mushrooms since it was the the last of its season. When I came back, people told me the Japanse war had started. I turned on the radio and listened to it. We received a phone call from San Diego and the boss told us not to leave the house. So, the boss came home right away.

Q: What did he say?

A: He didn't say anything in particular. All he said was that we didn't start the war and since we wouldn't fight in the war no one would tell us to do anything. It's a war between countries, not between individuals, he said. He was very understanding.

Q: What kind of work were you ding in that house?

A: I did housework like vacuming and things like that. My wife was the cook there.

Q: What happened after this? Were you surprised with the events of the times?

A: Sure, of course.

Q: Were you afraid for your life?

A: No, I wasn't. We had a good, understanding boss. No, we weren't afraid for our life. We had to go to camp after this.

Q: Which camp did you go?

A: We went to Tule Lake camp.

Q: Did you have to go to (unclear) at first?

A: No, we didn't. We went to Tule Lake right away.

Q: What did your boss say when the time came for you to go to camp?

A: Nothing in particular. He was the one who took us to the train station.

Q: Did your boss not want you to go to camp?

A: No, he didn't want us to go. He checked with the immigration office before we left to see if something could be done. But, nothing could be done, so he told us to go to camp. In camp I met alot of people from Sacramento and became friends with many of them. I knew Shimada who's farming now and I also knew Yamamoto. Shimada's daughter is a florist now - she married a florist and now has a flower shop. Teru married one of Yamamoto's children.

Q: What were some of your thoughts while you were in camp?

A: What did I think? It really made little difference what I thought. I was what the government did and it made no difference if we were against it or not. When we arrived in Tule Lake some of the people there told me that I didn't belong there. They told me that I should have been interned, but I told them that I really wasn't such a trouble maker. You know, all the men who worked with me in the gambling casinos were all interned. Also, the members of the Japanese associations were all interned. The reason I wasn't interned was because the time the FBI investigated the Japanese, the Tacoma casino was closed and I wasn't working there. So my name wasn't on their list. When I was sent to camp, I was working at a White family's house, so my name was not on the FBI list nor did they have a record of me. This was why I was sent to Tule Lake like the rest of the regular Japanese. I was very lucky. If you want to know about camp life, you should go ask either Shimada or Yamamoto when you go gack to Sacramento. Just tell them my name.

Q: Did you work while you were in camp?

A: Yes, I did. I was a policeman of a sort - a guard - at Tule Lake camp.

Q: What kind of work did that involve?

A: Well, I walked around the camp telling people to be careful and to help prevent any trouble in camp.

Q: What kind of trouble were there in camp?

A: You know, mostly bickering among the pro-war group and the other Japanese. One side would claim Japan won a certain battle or something and the other side would yell out, "Dog". And the altercations took in those forms. The fights weren't really that bad.

Q: Were there any burglaries or anything of that sort?

A: Oh, no , not at all. At least not in our Block. We didn't have any trouble in our Block. We were probably the most peaceful of all the Blocks in camp. Other Blocks would have fights between the pro-war Japanese and the groups calling them "Dogs" and they often disrupted our meals.

Q: Weren't they called the Hōshidan?

A: I don't know what they were called.

Q: You didn't belong to this group?

A: No, I didn't. What good will it have done to enter such a group, anyway? I don't know any details of the War and the only information we got was over the radio, so what good would it have done if we fought among ourselves with such little information? We are under the American government and it was useless to create such problems. We didn't have any problems of that kind in our Block.

Q: Did you feel Japan would win the War ultimately?

A: When I was in Japan I told some of the people that there was no way that Japan could ever win the war. When we heard that Japanese soldiers were going to speak at a college and people wanted to go hear them speak, I told the people that they shouldn't go. What good would it do to listen to them, anyway. They told me that Japan wouldn't lose a war if they started one with America. I told them to think about what they were saying. "If there was a trial, who would win, a person with money and property or a person with nothing at all? Just think about that. Japanese government has to buy scrp metal from the United States and the Japanese military makes ammunition from it. And if Japan went to war against the United States and after you use up all the ammunition that you already have, then what are you going to do about more ammunition?" I asked them. "Where would you get the materials you need to win the War? Japan just doesn't have the necessary materials and tools for a successful war," I told them. So they said that if I felt like this that I should go gack to America. I said to them, "of course".

Q: When you were in Tule Lake, there was a chūsen problem, right? What did you think of this?

A: I didn't side with either of them.

Q: You had to sign an alligience pledge. Did you sign yes or no?

A: I was never asked that question.

Q: Did you oppose or agree with the Nisei joing the American Army?

A: I told the youngsters directly that if they wanted to join the Army they should go in. "All of you belong to this country. You don't belong in this camp in the first place. Why should American citizens be sent to a camp? It's your choice now if

you want to join the army or not. You were forced to enter this camp so if you want to go, to, but if you don't want to go, don't go. I'm not going to tell you what to do". I told these things directly to my friends children. I said, "You are men of this American government and you must do what the American government says.

Q: Do you remember the incident where a man was killed in Tule Lake?

A: Yes. He was a store owner.

Q: Do you know much about the incident?

A: No, I don't. The police officers above me took care of the whole affair.

Q: What do you mean the "people above you"?

A: My bosses inthe police department. The detectives and the higher level officers took care of the affari, so I don't know anything about it. I had no connection with the investigation.

Q: I guess everyone must have been shocked.

A: No, not really. There are reasons for a man to be killed. That's just life.

Q: Was he the only man killed? Were there others?

A: No, I think he was the only person killed in camp. There were a lot of men who were beaten up. They got beaten up because they called the pro-War Japanese "dogs". There were reasons for them to be beaten up and the police knew who beat them, too. We were told where and when to go for our watch and we were often surprised at who the marked men were.

Q: You were on watch to the people wouldn't fight?

A: Yes, that's right. The head police knew who all were involved. The white guards would inform our head police and they in turn would tell us where to go for our watch. I would tell the

young people, "I don't care if you beat anyone up. Just don't do it when I came around on my watch. Just stop doing what you're doing when I come around. Just run away when I blow my whistle". When I'd go to see some of the men who had won the previous night, nothing would be said. The older men would say, "don't worry about those boys. They'll be alright". I knew who the boys were and so the people in the Blocks.

Q: Why would you go see them?

A: The pro-War Japanese would go out for marning exercieses and I would go check on them, like for roll call.

Q: Did you check who yell out the names first?

A: No, I wouldn't know such things.

Q: Were there reasons why the men would be called "Dogs"?

A: I have no idea of the motivations for their actions. I never sat down with them and talked about the affair.

Q: When did you leave the camp?

A: When the War ended.

Q: Were you sad when Japan lost the war?

A: No, I didn't think about the sadness of it. I already knew Japan would lose.

Q: What did you do after you were released from the camp?

A: I went back to where I was before the War - to Rochehauer Island. I went back to my old job with the family. My boss cam to visit us twice while we were in camp. The camp director was really surprised when he came.

Q: so you returned to the household and then . . .

A: Because of the segration law after the war, they told us to go to certain areas after we left Tule Lake. They told me to

go also but with my wife so ill, where could we go, anyway? I told them I'd only leave if I was allowed to go back where I came from before coming to Tule Lake.

Q: What kind of illness did your wife have?

A: We didn't know what it was.

Q: Was she in porr health?

A: Yes. A yar after we arrived in Tule Lake she becmae ill. She was ill off and on until she passed away. But, we were together for almost 10 years. She would hve been better if she had worked. The doctor gave her a lost of medicine. After she died, people told me to remarry, but once was enough for me.

Q: How many more years did you work at Rochehauer after the war?

A: For about a year or two more. Since I had to go to the hospital in ( ) it was too difficult to go back and forth from there. I moved to Seattle for convenience. So both of us moved to Seattle. I became a gardner and stayed at this hotel, the Hotel Gabriel.

Q: How much did you pay for a room in a hotel in those days?

A: Gee, I wonder how much we paid. I don't remember.

Q: Was it expensive?

A: No, I think it was pretty cheap.

Q: When did your wife pass away. Which year was it?

A: I don't remember

Q: Was it long after the war?

A: Oh, about 10 years or so after the war.

Q: Are you still staying in the same place?

A: I'm staying at a hotel, yes. It's called Alps.

Q: Are you still working?

A: No.

Q: Do you feel it was good that you came to America?

A: No, not particularly. My life would have been basically the same wherever I went. I don't think about good or bad of things anymore. I don't like to think in that manner.

Q: What was the most enjoyable time for you in America?

A: The most enjoyable? Probably those times when I was in Sumo competition.

Q: What are some of your hobbies?

A: I don't have any particularly hobbies. I guess Sumo wrestling and going fishing.

Q: Did you do anything enjoyable while you were in camp?

A: No, not in camp.

Q: Did you play Go or Shoji?

A: No, I don't play Go or Shoji.

Q: While you were working at gambling casisnos as a dealer, how many customers were there at one table?

A: I guess about 10 or 15 people stood around the table.

Q: It's like a crap table, then. You said there were three different tables in the casinos. What were the other two?

A: One was a black jabk table. Then there were Shi Ko and Ga Han tables.

Q: What is a Shi Ko table?

A: There are 4 beans and which ever one is left is the winner.

Q: Do you bet on one of the beans for a winner?

A: Yes, that's right. You hide the beans and after the bets are down, you bet on one of the chips. You count out the beans in

fours, so actually there is one in four chance to win.

Q: Who many beans are there all together?

A: There are about 360 beans, but if they are in button forms, then I don't know how many there are exactly. In the old days, the we used bean-shaped ones.

Q: That's a lot of beans to count.

A: Yes, we put that many beans in a can and cover it with our hands. We count the beans on the tables in fours and whichever one that's remaining is the winner.

Q: Do you win double your bet?

A: Depends on how you bet. You can bet on two beans so if you hit one of the beans that remains to the last count, then you win. Or if you want to double your bet . . . like forming combinations . . . if the number showed up, then you get your money back, but if you bet is right on the number, then you get double your bet. If you want triple your money, you bet one more than the normal and if you don't get it on the number, you lose the entire money, but if you get it on the nose, you get triple the money. There's a lot of different ways to bet.

Q: What was the other table called?

A: Called Ga Han. There are 5 wooden squares, stacked one on top of each other. Five people play at one time. A person throws the dice and whoever calls the right number three times in a row wins.

Q: You were the dealer in these games, right? You must have had to have a great deal of concentration ability.

A: Yes, that's true.

Q: You had to concentrate alot right?

A: Didn't need to use our minds too much for Ga Han, but Shi Ko

was different. We had to use our minds for Shi Ko or we would have lost quite a bit. We had to do all the counting and calculations while overseeing the games, too. There was someone else who took in the bets. We didn't have any cheaters in in Japanese casinos.

Q: You can cheat if you wanted to?

A: Sure you can. I've cheated and bot about $1,5000.

Q: It's difficult to catch, isn't it?

A: Yes it is and if you get caught, you're really in a lot of trouble. We didn't have any such problems in the Japanese casinos. It was different story in the Chinese casinos, though. Some of us cheated there.

Q: Do you mean the dealers?

A: Oh, no. Not the dealers, the customers would cheat.

Q: How can one cheat?

A: Well, a winner would refute the number of bars in Shi Ko. There's a lot of ways to cheat. I don't know.

Q: Is this how many fights started?

A: No, there were very little fights between the Chinese and the Japanese. Chinese wouldn't do things that would cause any fights with the Japanese.

Q: Why is this?

A: Because if the Chinese would start fights with the Japanese, they wouldn't go to the Chinese places to gamble and the Chinese would lose customers that way. The Japanese are the customers. Usually the Chinese will give in to the Japanese.

Q: Didn many Japanese lose a lot of money?

A: Yes, quite a lot. People in Fresno used the work "shakka-tai"

to describe this condition. Or called it "jessen-tai". This means getting a percentage from a winning customer who had gambled in a Chinese casino.

Q: Was this like a gang of some sort?

A: Yes, in a way. There were such groups in Stockton, too.

Q: Were they dangerous? They they use force to extort money?

A: Well, if they thought the man was weak, yes. If a man won any money, the group would follow him around nagging him for a cut of the winnings.

Q: Were there many people like this?

A: Oh, yes. There were many in Stockton, Fresno and the surrounding areas.

Q: Do you remember a place called Tokyo Club?

A: Yes.

Q: Were there some hoodlums at Tokyo Club?

A: Yes, there were. Whenever you say the name Tokyo Club, most people thing of hoodlums. We have the Toyo Club in Seattle. Tokyo Club was located in Los Angeles. What was the club called in San Francisco? I forgot. The Boss in Sacramento was called Tomutam. He later went to Seattle and worked uder a Boss there.

Q: Ther must be (unclear) gathers, right?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you have any connections with them?

A: No, not at all.

Q: Did many of these men come to the casinos often?

(INTERRUPTION)

Q: Didn't you meet some of these gang members in the casinos?

A: Yes if they came to the Japanese clubs. When I came to Tocoma, these men were very scared because they had heard a hit man had come from California. Yes, they were talking about me.

Q: You weren't a member of thier club were you?

A: Yes, I was. I was a member. I took five of the young members with me to Protland to see a Sumo competition. They asked me at that time, "are you a ganster?" I told them,yes. They replied, "no, you're not". The youngsters in Tacoma were really easy to get a long with and we were close. I took these youngsters to see sumo and other places.

Q: What did the Club members do?

A: All the men who worked at the Club were Club members.

Q: You mean as members of the Tokyo Club?

A: Yes, that's right.

Q: In Los Angeles?

A: Yes.

Q: Do the members make a deals with the boss or something?

A: No, not really.

Q: So it's different from the old system?

A: The head of the Club is the Boss.

Q: Are there any rules or regulations the Club members had to follow?

A: Yes, there were. If you go against the rules the first time, you get to keep your share in the Club (keep Club membership) and get expelled; the 2nd offense would require losing your share and getting expelled; the 3rd offense would be to get "fertilized", in another words, killed.

Q: What would cause such actions against you?

A: Well, say if you stole the casino's moeny or something of the sort.

Q: What would cause you to get "fertilized".

A: If you're suppose to spend the money in the casino, but instead steal it for yourself.

Q: What about the 2nd offense?

A: If you get caught in the process of stealing or if you get caught setting someone up for what you did. If the floor manager caught you, then that's when you'll get in trouble with with the Club.

Q: Have you ever tried to do something like this?

A: No, I haven't.

Q: Are you scared of the consequences?

A: No, it's not that, but what good would it do if I cheated or stole? It isn't that I couldn't cheat if I wanted to . . . all I need to do is pretend like I'm counting the money like this, fold the money and put it in my sox like this. I know people who steal in this manner.

Q: Can't you be caught doing that?

A: Oh, no you can't. It's hard to be caught

Q: Were there many people who became "fertilized"?

A: No, not too many. Most of the punishment ended in expulsion.

Q: Do you own a stock?

A: Yes, I do. You have to own it to work in a Club.

Q: Do you have to but it or do they give it to you?

A: You have to buy it. After that, they'd hire you to work.

Q: What do you call the head bosses? Boss? "Godfather"?

A: No, we didn't call them that. Sometimes we called them "Boss".

Q: Were the Bosses tough guys?

A: Well, they may be tough towards you if you worked there. The

where I worked was never tough or mean. But, Sato, the cook told me that he's encountered some fierce Bosses. The ones I dealt with were very good people.

Q: Did you ever work in a casino in Los Angeles?

A: No, never in Los Angeles. I know some Club members there and then, again, I didn't know some others.

Q: Did you know the men through your Sumo contacts?

A: Yes, that's right.

Q: In that kind of world, there must have been such thing as (jingei).

A: Yes, that's right. The Boss in San Francisco was called Ōki, the one who covered Los Angeles to the Imperial Valley was Gum Yasu and the one over here from Portland on was Tosa. These three were the big Bosses of the Western Coast.

Q: They must have ahd quite a bit of power.

A: Yes, they did. At the end, Tosa became the Number 1 Boss of the Coast. Oki got killed and so did Gum Yasu. With the two big Bosses dead, Tosa became the head of the whole coast by himself.

Q: Have you ever met any of these men?

A: Yes, of course. Even after the war, I was sending packages to Gum Yasu's home town.

Q: So these things went on even after the war?

A: Yes, it continued. In fact, some men attempted to set up a similar gambling system after the war in Seattle, but it succeed. I worked for awhile. I sent sugar and such items to in need in Japan, like to Tosa. I wanted to do something for Tosa so I asked him where he came from in Japan and so I sent things to him in Japan. After he died, we had a commemorative

party of the Boss.

Q: Did Gum Jasu and Oki die after the War?

A: Yes.

Q: Did they return to Japan after the War?

A: No, before the war.

Q: Did they die in Japan, then?

A: Yes, in Japan.

Q: Young people would like to learn about Issei experiences, so may we have your permission to let them hear this tape?

A: Sure, it's fine with me. It's something that really happened.

Q: Will you please sign here for your permission to edit any portions of this tape?

A: Alright. If you want to know anything more about me, you can ask Shimada and Yamamoto. Ask them anything you want. I don't mind.

Q: Please accept this $1.00 to signify we bought your taped memoirs.

A: I don't want any money for this. Really.

Q: You said you didn't have any children so does that mean you live alone?

A: Yes, that's right.

Q: So you have no one to look after you?? ?

A: Just a cousin in Los Angeles.

Q: Do you keep in close contact with your cousin?

A: No, I don't. Just through letters, but that is even too much trouble. I met his second eldest son when he came up here to go to school, to the University of Washington. I've never met the rest of his family. When I returned to Japan, the second eldest come to see me off at the airport. I don't know anything about his sister.

Q: Are you lonely?

A: No, I am not lonely.

Q: Do you have any friends?

A: Yes, I have friends.

Q: What do you do every day these days?

A: Nothing much. Going here and there - having fun. I can't go fishing any more because I don't have the money. I used to be able to go salmon fishing for only 30¢, but now just the boat ride alone cost 30¢ or 75¢. Everything comes up to $50 or $70. I don't have that kind of money.

Q: Where does your income come from?

A: I get social security and welfare money. I had a gall bladder operation and I couldn't pay for it, so I was able to get welfare to pay for the medical expenses.

Q: When did you have your operation?

A: In March.

Q: Had you ever been ill prior to this?

A: No, never. That was my first operation.

Q: You've been a healthy person.

A: I used to be very healthy.

Q: Your life-style is quite different from the other Japanese, isn't?

A: Yes, it is. The only time I really worked in a straight job was when I worked for that White family with my wife. Before that, I was a hoodlum going from one place to another. Yes, my life had been certainly different from the straight Japanese.

Q: Did you consider yourself a hoodlum in those days?

A: Yes, I do. I'm a hoodlum, so I don't go to places where many people get together. I don't show my face.

Q: Why? Will people . . .

A: It's not about people. I just don't open my heart up. I never forget the fact that I was once a hooodlum. People tell me that my past is the past and that no one will say anything about my past and that I should attend some of the social gatherings, but I still don't go.

Q: But, you didn't do anything bad did you?

A: No, I've never done anything bad. The youngsters were the only ones who really consider me or called me a hoodlum, though. That is, while I was working in the Clubs.

Q: So, you were a hoodlum in name only mostly?

A: Yes, that's right.

Q: And since you worked in casinos so people associated you with that, right?

A: YES.

Q: Have you ever maltreated anyone?

A: The bosses I had in the casinos always told us never to bully the straight customers in our jobs. If the customers begin to act up a bit while they're gambling, our bosses told us to put up with it and let it go if it was minor. Don't ever treat them wrong, the bosses told us. OUr bosses wouldn't allow it. We never maltreated any of our respectable customers.

Q: What did you call each other mong the members? Professionals?

A; We didn't call each other anything.

Q: What is the opposite of respectable?

A: The opposite would be the fun-loving pleasure seekers.

Q: did you call yourselves that?

A: Yes. That's what the member called themselves. The people are separated into the workers and the rogue.

Q: Do you feel like you're limited beacuse of your past?

A: I don't know about other people, but I do feel that way. Even if I was in the casihos. That;s why the rules stated that we weren't to maltreat the stright people. I've never fought with the straight people.

Q: Have you ever fought with men?

A: No, I never have.

Q: Have you ever beaten anyone up?

A: Yes. I've beaten some people in the past, occasionally.

Q: For wat reasons? Over some club affairs?

A: No, not in regards to the Club. Uusally over some verbal exchanges. But, those cases were few and far between.

Q: Have you always been a physically powerful man?

A: No, I wasn't always strong, but I competed in sumo wrestling so that probably and something to do with my strength. I was always quick.

Q: Did you get protection from your Boss in the Club?

A: I guess there was a system like that, but I never did anything to be in need of such a protection.

Q: Didn't some of the customers who had lost quite a bit of money while you were the dealer try to get back at you physically or otherwise?

A: No, never happened. My friends, some connected with the Club have gone out to fight, but I myself have never done anything like that.

Q: Were there any private wars between the various clubs?

A: No, there were no such things.

Q: So did the bosses get along well?

A: Yes. Then later, there was a rift between Gum Yasu and Oki and

Tosa had to intervene. Tosa sent Oki to Hawaii to cool off and got Gum Yasu to pay some money to Oki. But, he didn't get the money so Oki came back to the mainland.

Q: Then were there some trouble between the two?

A: Perhaps. I had nothing to do with their affairs. I don't know anything. This was an affair with the Bosses and only they knew about the nature of the problem.

Q: There aren't too many men left who were connected with the Clubs, are there?

A: No, none are left. I'm probably about the only one left. In Seattle, Takahashi is about the only man who knew anything about the inner circle that is still alive.

Q: Did the Clubs engage in prostitution rings?

A: No, they didn't. We had no connection with prostitution. If we had any connections like that, we'd be kicked out of the clubs. Prostitution was done by another group of men. We had no connection with the pimps.

Q: Was there any big bosses operating a large prostitution ring?

A: No, there weren't any. It was done on an individual basis. One buy would have 2 or 3 girls. That's about all. I don't really know much about it. I had no connections with it so I don't know.

Q: Ir's rumored htat the gang bosses usually ahd protitution rings, too.

A: No, there's no connection between the two. Not to my knowledge anyway.

Q: So the Bosses dealt only in gambling?

A: Yes, only in casinos.

Q: Did the Bosses also own restaurants or anyting like that?

A: Sometimes the Boss's wife might operate a restaurant. We didn't have any cases like that in Seattle, though.

Q: Do you know the name of the restaurants operated by the wives of Bosses?

A: In Los Angeles there was a place called Hamagaya. No, that's not the name of it. It was located right below Tokyo Club, what was that placed called? I forgot the name of the place. The Boss's wife operated that place. I forgot the name of it. Hamagaya was operated by Osatsu.

Q: Was it a large place?

A: Yes, it was.

Q: Did you hear much about prostitutions in those days?

A: NO, I didn't. I never heard much about it since I had nothing to do with that business.

Q: But as a Club member, everyone had one prostitute with them didn't they?

A: Yes, that's right.

Q: Things must have really changed since the old days.

A: Oh, yes, most certainly.

Q: Were there amny Club members with you at Tule Lake?

A: No, none at all. All the Club members were interned separately. I was the only one sent to a camp without first being interned. That's why everyone was so surprised to see me at Tule Lake. They asked me, "why did you come here?"

Q: What about the Bosses?

A: All the Big Bosses returned to Japan prior to the War.

Q: What about Gum Yasu?

A: Yes, he was killed before the war?

Q: Where?

A: In California. He was killed infornt of his own family. The same thing happened to Oki. Shot by guns.

Q: Did everyone know who did it?

A: No.

Q: Every Boss must have had a right hand man or body guards, right?

A: I'm sure they did. But the Boss probably didn't know how to choose his own personal men. That's why, I think, the Boss got killed. The Boss probably didn't have personal men who would give their lives away to protect the Boss, so that's why Oki and Gum Yasu ended up the way they did.

Q: A Boss must have a strong personality and character, hasn't he?

A: Yes, that's very true. I fyou don't have a strong character, then, that'll be the end of you. You must be able to have leadership qualities so the men will follow you and be dedicated to you.

Q: We heard some very interesting things about your past.

A: Yes, very few people know the inside of the story about the gang world like me. The young people only know that a place like Tokyo Club existed at one time and that there were Japanese gambling casinos in America at one time. But that's about all they know. There aren't too meny men left who really know the inside story.

Q: Were you already a Club member when you started working in the casino in Fresno?

A: No, there weren't any outsiders involved in the casino in Fresno. Just local people.

Q: So there was no connection between the Club and the casino

in Fresno?

A: No, not at all. The casino was independent. I got involved with the Club only after I went down to Los Angeles for the Sumo competition.

Q: But you never worked in Tokyo Club when you lived in Los Angeles?

A: No, I went down there for a Sumo competition. I then worked for a cigarette shop, in a cannery in Wellmington, and then became a fisherman. I nad nothing to do with the Club directly.

Q: When did you become a member?

A: I wasn't directly connected with the Los Angeles Tokyo Club, but I knew some people who belonged to the Club. I didn't know the insiders too well, though. I was walking on the outside for about a year.

Q: What do you mean by "walking on the outside"?

A: When the men gambled in the Market Street area I would be on guard walking the streets so none of the men would get carried away and cause problems. I made sure that people from different sides didn't accuse each other of cheating and start fights. I was like a body guard for the casisno.

Q: So is that how you got to be with the Tokyo Club?

A: Yes, I was with Tosa's group. Tosa had control of that entire area. Everyone had to obey Tosa's rules or they'd be in trouble.

Q: So you were a member of the Club in Los Angeles before coming to Tacoma?

A: No, not a member of the Tokyo Club. I joined membership with the Tacoma Club.

Q: Who was the boss in the Tacoma area?

A: His name was Sugihara.

Q: Did you work under him?

A: Yes, that's right.

Q: Who did Sugihara fork for?

A: he worked for Yanagida when he started, but then Yanagida got killed and after the place was raised to its ranks, Sugihara became the Boss. Sugihara was a very quiet man and he really didn't have the mentality to be a Boss, but men asked him to become the Boss so he agreed.

Q: Who was the Boss in Seattle?

A: Yamada was the first Boss. After Yamada returned to Japan, Yokoyama took over. After Yokoyama died from a car accident, Kimpa became the head. About the time Kimpa became the Boss here, the Boss in Los Angeles returned to Japan. So, there wasn't a Boss in the West coast. Kimpa, therefore, was selected to head the West Coast. Tosa returned to Japan, you know.

Q: What happened after Gum Yasu got killed?

A: Nothing happened.

Q: Was there a successor to Gum Yasu?

A: Gum Yasu had nothing to do with his successor. The only thing Gum Yasu had any say was about his company. Gum Yasu had nothing to do with the other things after he died.

Q: But a successor was chosen right away, right?

A: Ys. The only thing the Club head did was to succeed the campany. I don't know any details of this.

Q: What year did Gum Yasu get killed?

A: I don't remember which year it was.

Q Was it before the War?